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THE GARDEN CALENDAR.

A radio talk by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered through WRC and 39 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, January 13, 1931.

How-do-you-do Friends: I had prepared quite a speech for today, full of advice to fruit and vegetable growers about how to overcome their difficulties and make two apples or carrots grow where one grew before, and all that, when I happened to pick up the local paper and read the report that the American Red Cross is making an appeal for a fund of Ten Million Dollars with which to provide for thousands of families, many of them farm families, who are short of food. Right then and there I concluded that I had better continue along the line I followed last Tuesday and push the campaign for more and better home gardens, and for producing a larger part of the family living right at home.

Early potatoes are now being planted in Florida, and other potato growing sections of the south will be planting potatoes during the present month. Every mail is bringing the new seed catalogs, and last Saturday evening while working in my garden, I was called to supper while it was still daylight which reminded me that the daylight hours are lengthening, and it will not be long until we can be gardening in earnest. In the meantime, there are a number of things that fruit and vegetable growers can do and which will save time and trouble later. It is interesting to note how many insects and diseases of garden plants go through the winter in, or on, the trash and remains of old crops and weeds left in the garden. A thorough clean-up and burning of trash will greatly reduce the carry-over of these pests. If provision has not been made for a supply of composted manure with which to fertilize the garden or truck patch, better arrange for it now by hauling a few loads from the barnlot and piling it in a broad, flat pile, then turning it over two or three times in order to get it uniform and partially decayed.

On last Tuesday, I suggested a list of seeds and plants suitable for a southern early garden. It is not too early to begin the selection and ordering of seeds to be used in the middle sections, and the hotbed and coldframe should be gotten in shape for starting early plants. I would like to suggest that you plant plenty of early potatoes for home use, and perhaps a few to sell to the neighbors. Don't fail to plant plenty of early cabbage, turnips, kale, spinach and lettuce. Beets and carrots come quickly and are excellent foods, and don't neglect the peas, snap beans, sweet corn, tomatoes, and Lima beans, all of which will help to supply the home table. The main point is to get started early and to have our soil in such condition that we can make good crops.

We are getting thousands of letters from all parts of the country asking for advice about fruit and vegetable crops to be grown this year. Many of these letters are from persons who have had little or no experience in fruit or vegetable growing, or in any line of agriculture for that matter. They are

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dissatisfied where they are and want to get onto the land. Our advice to all is to proceed very carefully, and get the advice of the County Agent or other local people before venturing very far in either fruit or vegetable growing. The growers who have their trade established, either through roadside markets or the general markets, are, we believe, justified in going ahead on the basis of a normal acreage of standard fruit and vegetable crops with special emphasis upon quality, and reducing unit production costs.

It is significant that high yields of marketable product and low cost per unit usually go together. Take potatoes, for example, some of the growers in the 400 and 500-bushel clubs are often producing marketable potatoes at a cost around 30 or 32 cents a bushel while growers who are getting yields much below the average may be growing them at a cost upwards of 80 cents a bushel.

Right now there is certain work that fruit and vegetable growers should not neglect. Dormant spraying with lime sulphur or oil emulsions for the control of scale insects on fruit trees must be done during the winter or early spring before the buds start. The main point in applying a dormant spray is to find a time when there is little or no wind blowing so that a uniform covering of the trees may be secured. If the sprayer, the materials, and everything are in readiness, it is often possible to find short periods when conditions are right for applying the spray. I am mentioning this matter of dormant spraying repeatedly, as I consider it one of major importance. Farmers' Bulletin 908 gives information for fruit growers.

Pruning is also extremely important, but can be done under a little wider latitude of weather conditions. The methods of pruning, like those of spraying, vary with locality, climatic conditions, and kind of fruits being grown, so it is well to be guided by the recommendations of your State college and experiment station. We have a bulletin on pruning -- Farmers' Bulletin No. 181-F, also one on grape propagation and pruning, Farmers' Bulletin No. 471-F, copies of which we will be glad to send you upon request, but our advice is that you follow the methods that have been found best adapted to your locality. It is generally recommended that where large branches are removed from trees in pruning that the wounds be painted to prevent decay. A mixture of white lead and linseed oil, or any good house paint can be used for this purpose. Some authorities recommend the use of creosote for coating the wounds.

If you have a problem of insect or disease control in your grove or orchard, by all means get in touch with your county agent and through him your State college and experiment station. We would be glad to furnish you copies of the bulletins that I have mentioned today, but our advice is to get in touch with your State people first, because in many instances they have given the local problem attention and have found the best means of control.

In closing let me remind you that on next Tuesday at this hour we will present our regular meeting of the Progressive Garden Club. The purpose of these garden club meetings on the Farm and Home Hour is to stimulate the improvement of farm home surroundings. We are receiving many requests for member-

ship in the Progressive Garden Club. The names are being listed and the applicants are sent certain bulletins pertaining to home beautification and improvement. Other literature will be sent later. We desire to make this a real service for those who contemplate the improvement of their home surroundings. Our meeting next Tuesday will be devoted to outlining a plan for planting trees and shrubs about the home so be prepared with pencil and a sheet of paper with a map or plan of your yard, garden, house location, etc. drawn upon it then we will indicate how changes should be made; also where and what to plant.
